

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00 LAB-04 SIL-01

/030 W

-----011232Z 004786 /14

R 312155Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6422

FAA WASHDC

INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 1013

RIO FOR FAA IFO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, ELAB, VE

SUBJECT: DISMISSAL OF TEN PILOTS UPHELD: TO STRIKE OR NOT
TO STRIKE?

REF: 76 CARACAS 11772

1. ON JANUARY 28, ALMOST FOUR MONTHS AFTER THE TERMINATION OF THE 1976 PILOTS STRIKE, THE LABOR INSPECTOR WITH JURISDICTION OVER MAIQUETIA AIRPORT UPHELD THE DISMISSAL OF SIX AEROPOSTAL AND FOUR AVENSA PILOTS, ORDERING THE AIRLINES (INCLUDING VIASA WHICH HAD ALL OF ITS DISMISSALS OVERTURNED) TO REINSTATE THE OTHER THIRTEEN PILOTS UNDER SUSPENSION. THE TEN PILOTS DISMISSED INCLUDED LEADERS OF THE PILOTS UNION. ON JANUARY 30, IN AN APPARENT FURTHER SOFTENING OF THE GOV POSITION, LABOR MINISTER JOSE MANZO GONZALEZ INDICATED TO THE PRESS THAT AEROPOSTAL IS PREPARED TO REHIRE THREE OF ITS SIX DISMISSED PILOTS. THE PILOTS CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE UNION BE REHIRED AND THREATEN TO STRIKE ON FEBRUARY 2.

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2. THE GOV HAS LAUNCHED A CRASH PROGRAM TO BRING NAVI-GATIONAL AIDS AND OTHER SAFETY DEVICES UP TO STANDARD. AFTER FALSELY STATING TO THE PRESS THAT MAIQUETIA AIRPORT IS "FAA CERTIFIED AS SAFE", THE COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER HAS TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT HE WISHES TO SIGN THE LONG-PENDING AGREEMENT FOR FAA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON FEBRUARY 4 AND HAS ASKED FOR AN IMMEDIATE FAA FLIGHT CHECK (SCHEDULED FOR

FEBRUARY 8) OF THE SYSTEMS FOUND DEFECTIVE DURING THE LAST FAA VISIT IN SEPTEMBER 1976. THE DEFENSE ATTACHE LANDED AT MAIQUETIA ON JANUARY 27 AND REPORTS THAT ALL SYSTEMS CHECKED WERE OPERATIONAL AND THAT THE CONTROL TOWER PERFORMED WITHOUT A FLAW, IN MARKED CONTRAST TO MANY PREVIOUS LANDINGS. THE TWENTY AIR FORCE PILOTS TRAINED ON DC-9S BY MCDONNELL DOUGLAS AFTER THE LAST STRIKE ARE PRACTICING DC-9 LANDINGS ON AN ACCELERATED BASIS.

COMMENT: THE PILOTS ARE FACED WITH A DILEMMA. WHILE IT IRKS THEM TO ABANDON THEIR FIRED UNION LEADERS, THEY MUST SERIOUSLY WEIGH THE CHANCES OF SUCCESS BEFORE STRIKING. OF PARTICULAR RELEVANCE ARE: (1) THE BREAKDOWN IN UNION DISCIPLINE AT THE END OF THE 1976 STRIKE; (2) THE TWENTY AIR FORCE PILOTS QUALIFIED TO FLY THE DC-9S; (3) THE GOV'S EFFORTS TO UPGRADE NAVIGATIONAL AIDS; AND (4) THE INDICATION FROM THE LABOR MINISTER THAT THE NUMBER OF PILOTS ACTUALLY FIRED MAY BE FURTHER REDUCED IF THE PILOTS ARE WILLING TO BE REASONABLE. THE GOV IS HANDLING THE CRISIS AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL WITH A NEW MORE CONCILIATORY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND A NEW PRESIDENT AT AEROPOSTAL (THE PILOTS WEREN'T THE ONLY ONES FIRED AS A RESULT OF THE 1976 STRIKE). THE SECRET DEAL REPORTED BY CONFEDERATION OF VENEZUELAN WORKERS (CTV) PRESIDENT VARGAS TO THE LABATT IN OCTOBER 1976 (REFTEL) OF FOUR EVENTUAL DISMISSALS LOOKS VERY SIMILAR TO THE PUBLIC SETTLEMENT WHICH IS SLOWLY EMERGING. THE IBERO-AMERICAN PILOTS ASSOCIATION (IAPA) AND THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIRLINE PILOTS (IFALP) CONFIDENTIAL

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WHICH TOOK PUBLIC BLAME FOR THE 1976 SETTLEMENT WHICH LEFT 23 PILOTS SUSPENDED, HAVE BOTH PROMISED TO SUPPORT THE PILOTS IF THEY WALK OUT. VAKY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR STRIKES, PERSONNEL SEPARATIONS, AIRCRAFT PILOTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CARACA01013
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770035-0461
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Litigation History:
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